CULTURAL NORTH STAR
The values that guide us
A noble purpose

At DGSOM, we have a noble purpose: to heal humanity by improving human health, alleviating suffering and delivering acts of kindness.

The Cultural North Star unites every member of the DGSOM community in service of this mission.
Our guiding values

• The Cultural North Star fosters a strong organizational culture by mapping our decisions, actions and interactions to a shared mission-driven framework.

• That framework comprises three pillars: “Do what’s right,” “Make things better” and “Be kind.”

• Each pillar is defined by four purpose statements.
DO WHAT’S RIGHT.

We are united by our shared mission of advancing science and medicine.

We work together to eliminate inequity.

We are grounded in ethics and data.

We balance the short and long-term effects of our actions.
MAKE THINGS BETTER.

We come to work to make an impact
We are constantly curious
We seek out diverse voices
We embrace failures as opportunities to learn
BE KIND.

We are strongest when we show empathy.
We have the courage to be honest.
We listen to understand.
We engage in dialogue even when we disagree.
CULTURAL NORTHSTAR

Do what’s right.
We are united by our shared mission of advancing science and medicine
We work together to eliminate inequity
We are grounded in ethics and data
We balance the short and long-term effects of our actions

Make things better.
We come to work to make an impact
We are constantly curious
We seek out diverse voices
We embrace failures as opportunities to learn

Be kind.
We are strongest when we show empathy
We have the courage to be honest
We listen to understand
We engage in dialogue even when we disagree
A shared playbook

Together, these guiding values:

• Unite and inspire us in our shared mission.

• Encourage transparent and compassionate communication.

• Support diversity in all its forms.

• Set clear and high expectations for our actions and interactions.

• Facilitate problem-solving, decision-making and collaboration.

• Enhance our reputation as a place to work and learn.
A competitive edge

A large body of research has shown that a strong organizational culture:

- Is correlated with superior business performance across a range of measures, including return on investment, talent retention and employee performance;

- Conveys a sense of identity to employees, provides guidelines for how to get along in the organization and helps stabilize the organization’s social system;

- Is correlated with increased job satisfaction; and

- Fosters collaboration, innovation and novel problem-solving.
Take the first step
Celebrate the best of us: It’s a win-win

Offering positive recognition is a simple but transformative act. And the research agrees. Feelings of gratitude are associated with positive benefits for both the receiver and the sharer, including:

• A happier, more motivated brain.
• A boost in performance, engagement and well-being; and
• A stronger connection to your colleagues.

“DeeAnna Serna reorganized our PFT room to maximize space and improve infection control for our cystic fibrosis patients. She goes above and beyond to ensure that science informs our medical therapy.”

– ANGEL MAREE JONES, PEDIATRIC PULMONOLOGY
Recognize someone for living the Cultural North Star!

Grab a physical recognition card at one of our Cultural North Star recognition stands or fill one out online:

uclahs.fyi/recognition
Try some Cultural North Star practices

- Start **team meetings** by reading the Cultural North Star.
- Take a **Cultural North Star “time out”** during crucial conversations.
- Highlight the Cultural North Star throughout the **recruitment and professional development process**, such as in offers letters, interviews or awards.
- Attend **skill-building opportunities** as they become available: medschool.ucla.edu/cultural-north-star/events
Map your actions to our guiding values

**Do what's right. Make things better. Be kind.**

- Daily conversations, emails and interactions
- Decisions, big and small
- Collaborations, within your team or across our organization
Join a Coffee with the Dean session

Each month, Dean Kelsey Martin meets with eight to 10 members of the DGSOM community to discuss one of the Cultural North Star purpose statements.

Learn more and register: medschool.ucla.edu/cultural-north-star/events
Be a brand ambassador

- Post the Cultural North Star flyer in your work/study space.
- Set the Cultural North Star as your desktop wallpaper.
- Participate in Cultural North Star training opportunities.
- Wear your DGSOM Cultural North Star lanyard.

For Cultural North Star marketing assets, visit medschool.ucla.edu/cultural-north-star/downloads.
Our culture journey

Over time, the Cultural North Star will be embedded in DGSOM’s organizational DNA.

- Rewards, recognitions and leadership promotions
- Orientation and on-boarding
- HR and Academic Affairs
- Hiring, recruitment and search committees
- MD curriculum
- Professional development
- And more!
Our culture journey

• Culture change is a slow and organic process.

• It takes patience, optimism and an active effort, every day, from every member of our organization.

• Every time we choose to live by the Cultural North Star, we take one step closer to building and sustaining an inclusive, mission-driven culture.
“I look at the Cultural North Star pillars as a three-legged stool. I can measure my behavior against them at all times. When I’m writing an email, participating in a meeting or having a 1:1 conversation, I ask myself, ‘Am I Doing What’s Right, Making Things Better and Being Kind?’ It’s simple yet truly makes me a better employee and collaborator.”
A world-class pediatric airway specialist was visiting our campus as part of his recruitment process when he was asked: ‘You have so many places to choose from. Why choose UCLA?’

Without hesitation, he reached into his jacket pocket, pulled out a Cultural North Star recognition card and said, ‘The Cultural North Star principles set UCLA apart; this is what defines UCLA and matches my ethos.’”
I have started referencing the Cultural North Star at the beginning of my recurring committee meetings, reminding everyone to hold themselves and others accountable.

I’ve noticed a huge difference in the way members of these committees interact when I use the Cultural North Star to set the stage.”
Learn more:
medschool.ucla.edu/cultural-north-star

Share your stories, ideas, feedback:
culturalnorthstar@mednet.ucla.edu